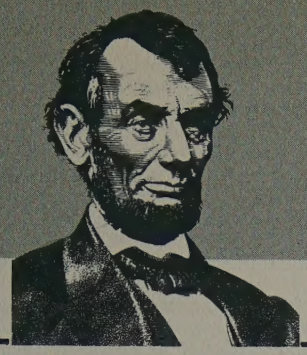

Lincoln Lore

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EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION
"A Still Further Step—Beyond The Law"

The Emancipation Proclamation issued by Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863 was highly unpopular not only in the South and with Democrats but with many high ranking Republican politicians who formulated party principles.

One of the chief opponents of the Emancipation Proclamation was Richard W. Thompson, an Indiana lawyer, who served as a Whig Congressman in 1847-1849 while Lincoln was a member of that branch of the federal government.

Thompson, later to gain a reputation as a writer of political platforms, was quite active in political affairs during Lincoln's administration serving officially as a presidential elector on the Republican ticket in 1864. In later years he was elected a delegate to national Republican conventions and in 1876 was nominated by Oliver P. Morton of Indiana for president of the United States. In 1868-1869 he was judge of the 18th Circuit of the State of Indiana, and on March 12, 1877 Thompson entered the cabinet of President Rutherford B. Hayes as Secretary of the Navy. He resigned this position in 1881 to become chairman of the American Committee of the Panama Canal Campany.

At the suggestion of several conservative members of Congress, mostly from the border slave states, Thompson wrote Lincoln, twenty-six days after the Emancipation Proclamation had gone into effect, a long letter setting forth in a masterful way the best arguments which the opposition could formulate against the document.

The basic premise of the argument is the protection of the property of all the loyal citizens of the South. This original seventeen page autograph letter on ruled legal paper is a part of the Thompson Papers acquired by the Lincoln National Life Foundation a number of years ago. The letter is unsigned, however, provisions were made for many signatures to be affixed to the document, making it into a petition, rather than a letter.

Washington, January 26th, 1863

His Excellency
Abraham Lincoln
President of the United States

Sir:

At such a time as the present, when the country is lacerated with civil war, and every loyal heart palpitates with intense anxiety, we feel ourselves fully justified in laying before you our views of the policy you have adopted for conducting the war. We shall do it in the spirit of frankness and moderation. We have still a nation to be preserved,—the constitution yet survives the shock of battle,—and we should prove recreant to the obligations which rest upon us as citizens of a government, hitherto the happiest in the world, were we to omit to do, whatever we may rightfully do, to perpetuate it for our children. We dare not slacken our exertions until all the States are brought back again into a cycle of harmonious union, and held there, by ties which the maddened spirit of faction cannot sever.

You are the constitutional head of the government, and no other man upon earth now occupies a position of so much influence and responsibility. The life or death of the nation is, in a great measure, in your hands. If it shall live, all mankind will assign to you one of the brightest places in history:—if it shall die, we shall have no future to engage the pen of the historian. No such issue was ever before, in so great a degree, left to the decision of one man;—and the civilized world is looking on, with intense anxiety, to see how you shall decide it.

The rebellious states are seeking to destroy the constitution, and you have called to the field, to protect and defend it, an army large enough to excite the wonder of all Europe. The gallant and noble-hearted soldiers who compose this army, have obeyed your call with unparallelled alacrity, and have willingly exchanged the comforts of home for the hardships of the camp and the hazards of the battle-field, that they may fight for the *Constitution*, and carry it, under the protection of the National flag, back again to the States from which it has been expelled by fraud and violence. Such an army may be trusted wherever it is led, so long as *this* great object is kept steadily before it. What it would become, if another object were substituted for this, infinite wisdom can alone foresee. We should dread, if we had the power, to lift the veil which conceals such a future.

The Constitution of the United States extends over every part of the nation. The Union, which it has cemented together for three-quarters of a century, was designed to be perpetual, and no earthly power, except the authority which created it, can set a limit to its duration. The advocates of secession have dared to assert this power, for the State governments, and have wickedly taken up arms to defend and maintain it. But they have not thereby released a single citizen of the United States from his allegiance to the government of the Union. To concede that they have, would dissolve the further concession, that secession has, to that extent, produced the result they claim for it. But if they have not, then every citizen who adheres to the government, whether in a loyal or disloyal State, must be entitled to the protection of the Constitution. As for those who have drawn the sword of rebellion, all loyal men agree that they have no just claim to this protection.

Congress fully recognized the truth of these propositions, when, at its last session, it thought it expedient to pass a statute defining, in effect, the relations borne by each of these classes of citizens to the government. It provided, by this law, that, upon the trial and conviction of a *rebel* in a Court of Justice, whatever property he possessed should be liable to forfeiture and confiscation. The loyal people of the country acquiesced in the provisions of this law, and the avowal by you that it would furnish the rule of your official action in the conduct of the war, enabled you to add, without difficulty, more than half a million of men to the army. You have, however, without awaiting any further legislation, thought it to be your duty to take a still further step—*beyond the law*—and to issue a *proclamation* giving freedom to the *slave* property of every *loyal* man, woman, child and lunatic, who is so unfortunate as to reside within the limits you have defined. By this act, as it seems to us, you propose that loyal citizens shall be punished by the forfeiture of their property, when, *by the law*, they are held guiltless of any offense against the government. You do not propose to await their conviction for crime, but to inflict the punishment you have prescribed while they are in the very act of clinging to the Constitution with undoubted loyalty. To us it appears that you have thereby given to secession,—certainly without designing it—much of the effect which its supporters claim for it. An act of secession is wholly valid or wholly invalid:—it cannot be part the one thing and part the other. If wholly invalid,—as all loyal men esteem it to be—it does not exempt any of the citizens of a seceded State from their obedience to the Constitution;—wherefore, you exact this obedience of them, and employ the military power of the nation to compel it when refused. But we pray you to remember that this military power is not put in your hands by the Constitution to be employed against *loyal* citizens, although in a

seceded State. *They* are not engaged in any war against the government;—nor do they refuse obedience to the Constitution. You could not be justified in employing military force against them, except upon the assumption that an act of secession is *valid* to the extent of putting *all* the citizens of a seceded State in open rebellion against the government, however tenaciously and firmly a portion of them may cling to it. Such a consequence we are sure you must not only concede to be undesirable, but unjust.

Whatever there may otherwise be in the doctrine of *military necessity*, outside the strict provisions of the Constitution, we declare, in all sincerity, that we cannot understand how such a necessity can so exist as to be rightfully employed against either the persons or property of *loyal* citizens. It only justifies an act against *an enemy*, in retaliation for what he has done. It is a *war* power exclusively, as the term itself implies. But the *loyal* citizen is not an enemy, to be resisted or punished by this war power:—on the other hand, he is a friend to be defended and protected by it. The army may shoot down an enemy, without being guilty of murder;—and the law may justly forfeit and confiscate his property, and inflict punishment upon his person, as a proper penalty for his treason. But the army may not shoot down a *loyal* man, who has not assumed hostility to the government, without doing violence to justice and right;—and the law leaves his property untouched,—liable to neither forfeiture nor confiscation,—because he has committed no crime. Yet, notwithstanding this manifest distinction, your proclamation makes none whatever between those who are loyal and those who are disloyal, and invokes the military power equally to punish both:—that is, you propose by it to employ the war power against those who *have not made war upon the government*, precisely as you employ it against those who have! We beg you to consider whether this is just, or according to the genius and spirit of our institution.

By international law, when independent governments are at war with each other, all their citizens are treated as public enemies. Not so, however, in the case of a civil war, where only those are enemies who take part in the rebellion. If it were otherwise, we should not have advanced beyond those customs which distinguished the barbaric ages, and would stand reproached by the spirit of Christianity and civilization. By every rule of law, both divine and human, the innocent should be screened from punishment. The rod of chastisement is designed alone for the guilty.

Treason is a crime for which those who commit it are personally and individually, not collectively, liable. Our confiscation act is based upon the idea that each disloyal man,—whether he reside in a loyal or a disloyal State,—shall be punished, by the forfeiture of his property, for his own personal offence. It treats the citizen as owing a two-fold allegiance,—to the United States, and to the State wherein he resides,—and forfeits his property only when he has violated the former,—not the latter. He cannot do this, except by his own act. The State of his residence has no such authority over him as to exact to itself paramount obedience, and discharge him from his higher allegiance to the whole Union. If it has the right to command and enforce this obedience from him, then it must necessarily follow that it possesses the power to secede from the other States;—for if it can remit to one of its citizens the penalty for disobedience to the Federal authority it can remit it to all, and thus terminate the Union. And yet your proclamation places the loyal man precisely in this position:—it subordinates the relation which he bears to the Union, by the true theory of the Constitution, to that which he bears to his State. You assume him to be guilty of treason, when he has not committed any crime whatever, in the eye of the existing law. You punish him for what *others* have done. You declare, in effect,—yet, certainly, without intending it—that an act of secession, though passed in fraud and without power, and, therefore, void under the Constitution, has placed the *whole community* of a seceded State in warlike hostility to the Union. If such were indeed the fact, how would they be brought back again to their allegiance? The validity which this theory attaches to the act, would give it such effect, that they could only return again to obedience to the Union by a rescission of the act, by the same power that passed it,—or by military force, reducing them to subjugation, and to be applied, not merely for a month or a year, but until something should be done signifying that the *whole community* had consented, in some form, to the rescission Under this theory the whole State would be liable to be held as a conquered province, by military force, however loyal a portion of its citizens might be,—to be parcelled out, under the idea of military necessity, to other occupants. Can military necessity warrant such a state of things as this, while the Constitution stands? We must be permitted to say, respectfully, that, in our opinion, it cannot. No such thing as military necessity, as it seems to us, can exist in any case where the act to be done by virtue of it, is directed against an individual true and loyal to the Constitution. If it could, the proper distinction between loyal and disloyal men would be broken down, and a reign of anarchy would be inaugurated, where there should be a reign of law. You must have had your mind directed to this distinction when you prepared your proclamation, but, practically, the proclamation reverses it;—for by its provisions you endeavor to set free the slaves of *loyal* men in ten States, without judicial process, while you omit to set free the slaves of *disloyal* men in other sections of the Union;—and this too, when these loyal men are at peace, defending the Constitution, and the disloyal ones are in open and armed rebellion against it. You also preserve for the latter the right of judicial trial under the confiscation act, and take it away from the former. You direct your military power against the citizen who is at peace with the Union,—while, at the same time, you employ your civil power only against such as are at war in States which you have excepted. Certainly, the Constitution affords no warrant for this. We speak plainly,—but the perils of the Country are thickening so rapidly that we dare not speak otherwise. Yet we speak respectfully.

On the 17th day of last February, *Mr. Seward*, as Secretary of State, addressed a confidential letter to Mr. Adams, our Minister at London, putting him in possion of your views in reference to emancipation,—that he might communicate them to the British government. In this letter he said:

"If the Union prevails, the government will be administered by a majority hostile to the fortification and perpetuation of slavery. *Slavery in the slaveholding States will there be left in the care of the people of those States just as it was left at the organization of the government in all the States except Massachusetts.*"

You had frequently before expressed this opinion yourself, in very emphatic language, and it was satisfactory to the country and the army,—because the popular judgment responded to it. We know of no class of men who took exceptions to it, except that small class, scattered throughout the North, who desired to turn the war from its legitimate object of defending and restoring the Constitution, into a crusade against slavery,—to be persisted in until the whole institution was exterminated. These men were clamoring for *universal emancipation*, and assailed you, with much violence of passion, because you suffered yourself to be, as they insisted, hampered by the Constitution. One of them,—a leading and influential man,—thus expressed himself:

"President Lincoln is a man of understanding and of honest intentions; and why he has not ere this ended the war and saved the Country is simply *because he is a worshipper of the Constitution, and feels that he can love, and honor, and serve, and save the Country only through the Constitution.*"

Mr. Seward could not, with his acknowledged sagacity, fail to see how imminent was the danger that this class of men,—employing the zeal and energy which fanaticism always engenders,—might find sympathy amongst the people of Great Britain, and thus influence the British government to intervene in our affairs. Accordingly, he furnished to Mr. Adams a complete answer to all their clamorous denunciation of your avowed policy, and to all their vaporing about an emancipation crusade. He said to him:

"Although the war has not been waged against slavery, yet the army acts immediately as an emancipating crusade. To *proclaim* the crusade is *unnecessary*, and it would even be *inexpedient*, because *it would deprive us of the needful and legitimate support of the friends of*

the Union who are not opposed to slavery, but who prefer union without slavery to disunion with slavery.

"Does France or Great Britain want to see a *social revolution, with all its horrors, like the slave revolution in St. Domingo?* Are these powers sure that the Country or the world is ripe for such a revolution, so that it may be certainly successful? What, if inaugurating such a revolution, slavery, protesting against its *ferocity and inhumanity,* should prove the victor?"

These are plain and emphatic words. They were most fitly spoken, and at the proper time. All loyal men in the North understood your policy to be what they have expressed, and *the North was united.* All loyal men in the South so understood it also, and *the South was divided.* But the class we have mentioned became infuriated by the rebuke of *Mr. Seward,* and resolved upon bringing about a change in your policy if possible;—because they feared that it would lead to a restoration of the Union, with the constitutional guarantees in favor of slavery still existing. They, consequently, assailed both you and *Mr. Seward* with unusual severity. They pursuaded, denounced, and threatened. They occupied the Executive mansion with their committees, from day to day. They had abundant leisure to devote to this work, but never thought of shouldering a musket, though the Country was bleeding at every pore, and our gallant soldiers were drenching numerous battle-fields with their blood. No opposing or counteracting influences could reach you, half so readily, because the men of other views,—the great conservative class, of all parties,—were devoting their services to the Country;—some in the field, and others giving their time and wealth to the vigorous prosecution of the war and your avowed policy of conducting it. For a while you resisted their importunities and resolutely repulsed them. The Country rejoiced at your firmness, and liberally sustained you. The North continued to be united in your support. But, at last they accomplished their object, and you, yielding to them, issued your proclamation of emancipation, which came upon the Country like the sounding of an alarm-bell in the middle of the night, and startled and aroused the nation. It immediately invited and encouraged the reorganization of a political party which was dead, and has already given it life enough to snatch the power from the supporters of your administration in the great conservative States;—in States which, before the war, stood in the Union as a bulwark against the extremes of sectional fanaticism, and which, since the war, have given to the army more than three-fourths its strength. And thus, in a few months only, *the North has been divided, and the South has become more united!* This is already an accomplished fact.

Instead of adding to the strength of the army, it has put almost an entire stop to volunteering, so that the old regiments which have been reduced by the war, cannot be filled by enlistments, and Congress is now considering a plan of consolidation as a remedy. It has not caused a single one of those who have urged this policy upon you, to take up arms, or to give an additional dollar to the support of the war. It has not improved, in any degree, the credit of the government, but, on the contrary, has given rise to increasing suspicion against the stability of its financial system. It has excited in the popular mind—and, possibly, in your own,—the fear and apprehension that you could not enforce a draft, if you were to attempt it. It has aroused such an opposition to your suspension of the writ of *Habeas Corpus,* that the highest courts in States, heretofore considered of undoubted loyalty, are deciding, almost daily, that it is an act of unconstitutional usurpation. It has weakened the power of your friends and supporters in both houses of Congress, and in the Legislatures of the largest States of the Union. It has furnished an occasion for the utterance of revolutionary sentiments all over the North, until thousands of good men shrink from the contemplation of the consequences. It has raised up a formidable party which is industriously and dangerously fanning the flame of discord between the Northwestern and the New England States, and who threaten that if the war is prosecuted upon the principles of your proclamation, they will prefer to disunite these two sections. It has paralized the Union men of the seceded States, and forced them to call upon the rebel confederacy for protection in their rights of property. It has intimidated the loyal men of the border slave States;—for they see that the power you assert is only suspended over them, and may be exercised whenever you, in your private judgement, shall see fit to employ it. Its influence has even reached the army, and occasional mutterings of discontent are heard along its lines. It has invited a factious war upon your Cabinet, which has been carried so far that the attempt has been made to dictate to you who shall and who shall not be your constitutional advisers, and the usurpation has been already accompanied with the threat that unless you shall yield to its dictation you will be *forced to resign!* It has furnished an additional motive for foreign intervention, and encouraged those who favor a cessation of hostilities with a view to negotiation. It has supplied the rebel President with the very argument he desired in support of the pretext for the rebellion;—a pretext which was miserably false at the beginning of the war. It has made those who have urged it upon you still more clamorous against peace, upon any terms, until every slave in the land shall be made free. We repeat, that it has *divided the North* and *united the South.* We shudder at the thought of what it may do beyond this, if persisted in by you.

We would put down the rebellion by employing every lawful power and invoking every energy of the nation,—both moral and physical. We would strike it at every point where a blow could be made effectual to paralize its power. It is both wicked and causeless;—unexampled in history for its enormity. And we pledge ourselves,—calling both angels and men to witness our sincerity,—that we will give our honest support to such measures of the government as may be necessary to suppress it, thoroughly and entirely. But we beg to assure you that, in our opinion, this result. so much desired by all the lovers of the Country, can only be brought about by again *uniting the North and keeping it united.* Its *whole* strength is needed for this mighty work,—for the world, in all the part of its history, has never known such a war as this, before. To unite the North again, you must, as far as possible, remove the cause which produced its division, by giving just and proper protection, under the Constitution, to *all loyal men throughout the Country,* wherever they may be found, both in their persons and property. We see nothing in the mere ownership of slave property, necessarily incompatible with loyalty to the government. Some of the best and purest men of the nation;—whose names we teach our children to lisp with affectionate fondness,—have been the owners of slaves. The Convention which framed the Constitution was composed, mainly, of those who represented the slave-holding interest, and we are not ready to admit that any body of men ever assembled upon earth, surpassed that Convention in integrity, patriotism and virtue. Slavery is an institution of the States,—whether justly or unjustly we do not stop now to inquire. It must be left there if the harmony of our system of government is to be preserved, until the States shall surrender their power over it. The citizens who hold slaves do not hold them merely as citizens of the United States, but as citizens of the States. They pay allegiance to the State for the right to hold them, which, although subordinate to the higher allegiance they owe to the Union, is yet independent of it,—for it involves duties which pertain to State-citizenship alone. For the manner in which these duties are discharged they are liable only to the community of the State, through the law which expresses their will. By the consent of the State, then given, they hold their slaves, and when you, as the representative of the authority of the Union, undertake to say that they shall not hold them, because the community of the State have passed an Act of Secession, you give a sort of legitimacy to the act by punishing all those who compose the community, instead of confining your punishment to those only who participate in it;—for it is clear that those who refuse this consent, still remain true to their higher allegiance to the Union. Hence, in a time of war you cannot have, as President, any more power over questions of mere state policy, as they may affect those who still pay this latter allegiance, than you have in time of peace. And, therefore, the question whether slavery advances or retards the prosperity of a State, or whether the slave of a loyal man shall still remain in bondage, or be made free, must be left where the Constitution leaves them,—to the States themselves. An act of secession,—which is, to all intents

and purposes, void—cannot enlarge or diminish your power over these questions. If *rebellion* does, then you can only invoke the war power, which does not deal with States, as such, or with citizens not at war, but with those who participate in the rebellion.

Therefore, when we urge upon you a change in the policy of your proclamation, so as to protect all loyal citizens, we do not ask you to involve yourself in an act of inconsistency, in the common understanding of that term. Right and justice are never inconsistent with a proper discharge of official trust;—error always is. The first and highest duty of a President is to do right, and leave the consequences to God and the Country. But if there were inconsistency in what we ask, we pray you to remember that the welfare of a Nation is at stake;—and more that that, its very existence. By the side of such an issue, all considerations, merely individual and personal, dwindle into utter nothingness, and no man who loves his Country more than he loves himself, should suffer them, for a moment, to come across the path of public duty. No censure can be violent enough to injure, and persecution cannot kindle its fires hot enough to harm the man who forgets himself and saves his Country. The world does him most willing homage, angels rejoice over the act, and God approves it.

We all have a present duty to perform. We must put down the rebellion, and restore the Constitution. To do this we must realize its extent, as well as its enormity. We must not forget that, when it begun, those who were most hostile to slavery were the first and loudest in predicting that the war would be of short duration,—that the South would yield at the first onset from the North, because slavery had made its people an imbecile and unwarlike race. They were so successful in impressing this sentiment upon your mind, that your first call for volunteers was limited to seventy-five thousand men;—yet subsequent events have proven that this number was utterly inadequate to the object. You have been compelled to add more than *a million* to these, and even now the rebellion, in a military sense, is almost as far from being suppressed as at the beginning of the war. The South, instead of being feeble and effeminate, has shown extraordinary and wonderful capacity to conduct the war, and whether this is attributable to desperation or some other cause, we shall yet require all the strength and energy of the nation to reduce it into submission to the authority of the government. Yet, we must do it, whatever the cost, or however great the hazard. It must be done without delay, or it may not be done at all. If the North shall be brought into unity again, the task will be thereby made the easier; and no step necessary to secure this should be omitted, for a day or an hour, although many of us, in order to do it, may be required to give up some of our pre-conceived opinions upon abstract questions of governmental policy.

We cannot understand how your proclamation, as an act of general emancipation, is to aid in terminating the war. Is it by exciting insurrections amongst the negroes, against their masters? That we know you do not contemplate or desire, and *Mr. Seward* has invited both France and England to consider that it would be attended with *"horrors, like the slave revolution in St. Domingo."* He has characterized it as *ferocious* and *inhuman.* Is it that, by placing arms in the hands of the negroes, they may enter our army as soldiers, and fight our battles for us? We have more than enough of *white* soldiers for this, if the North were united again, so that it could put forth its strength. Besides, we must get possession of the negroes before we can employ them,—which, so far as the slaves of rebels is concerned, can be done as well without as with the proclamation. Is it that, by proclaiming the crusade against slavery, our army is to be increased by additional numbers from that class who have urged you to the adoption of the measure? Nothing of this kind has yet occurred, although, but the other day, the main column of the army was repulsed in one of the bloodiest battles of the war. How, then, is it to produce such results as were predicted for it? The plain and simple truth may be stated in a few words:—those who have induced you to make this proclamation have been, all the time, and are yet, invoking the employment of your *civil* and not your *military* power,—whatever they may pretend to the contrary—and will oppose you as fiercely in the future as they have done in the past, unless you shall consent to continue the war *for the sake of emancipation alone.* Every sentiment they utter proves this, and demonstrates to all the world,—as it must already have done to you,—that, if you are to terminate the war so as to restore the Constitution, the conservative masses, of all parties, must be your chief reliance.

Honestly impressed with these views, which have ripened into settled convictions, we have thought it our duty to lay them before you in this form, because they can thus be more satisfactorily conveyed than if individually expressed. We earnestly hope that they may induce you to *modify your proclamation so that the slaves of loyal men may be exempted from its operation.* We are convinced that, by doing this, one great cause of complaint will be removed, and that your remaining policy may be pursued with greater energy and with far less exciting opposition. As the army shall then advance, carrying the Constitution with it and bearing aloft the flag of the Union, you can, more readily and successfully, inflict upon *rebels,* wherever they may be found, the punishment they deserve, and which the law has fixed. We have no words of excuse or defence for them. They have chosen their own course, and the consequences must fall upon their own heads. If, by the necessary progress of our army, they lose their slaves, they must attribute it to their own act of bringing on the war. We leave them to the fate they have selected for themselves. But we address you, with earnestness and sincerity in behalf of *our loyal countrymen;*—those who remain faithful to the Constitution and the government, although expelled from their homes and families, and visited with threats, persecution and death. They are still our fellow-citizens. And, on their account, as well as on account of the cause of the Union, we pray, we entreat, we implore you, so to conduct the war as not to take from them that protection to their property which the local policy of their respective States has given them, and which the Constitution of the United States has solemnly guaranteed. In a word:—let the war be conducted in the rebellious districts, *only against rebels.* Let the supporters of the Union, everywhere, understand and feel that it is carried on, not against *them,* but against armed traitors and their aiders and abettors,—for whom no words of intercession should be uttered until they have laid down their arms, and returned to the first allegiance they owe to the government of the Union.

We have the honor to be, in all sincerity,

Your obedient servants
(Not Signed)

Years later Thompson wrote in pencil on the back side of the last page of the letter the following explanation:

"This letter was written in Washington by me, at the suggestion of several conservative members of Congress, chiefly from the border slave states—amongst them Crittenden and Mallory of Ky.—Etheridge and Hatton of Tenn.—Harris of Va., etc.

"After it was written it met with general approval but after deliberation it was decided not to send it.

"Lincoln heard of it and afterwards asked me about it. When I explained to him its general purport, he said I had made one capital mistake—and when I asked him what it was he said, 'There were no loyal slave owners in the South.' "

It is of interest to note that even after a brief explanation of the letter's "general purport" Lincoln's astute grasp of the slavery question immediately revealed that his critics had based their arguments on a fallacy. Even Thompson confessed later on that "he had not seen as far as Lincoln or known so much." After Lincoln's assassination Thompson referred to the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation as "one of the most important events of modern times and as the most important and far-reaching course of policy Lincoln could possibly have adopted."

Charles Roll in his biography "Colonel Dick Thompson— The Persistent Whig," Indiana Historical Bureau, Indianapolis, Indiana, stated that Thompson "believed that it (Emancipation Proclamation) was issued at exactly the right time to insure its success, and that it would not have succeeded if it had been done at any other time, in any other manner, and by any other man."